

READY FOR ACTION

Today's lesson intrigues me, much like the prophets and angels were intrigued by all that God was going to do, I read this text and want to know more, I want to know how He is going to accomplish what He says, in my life and in yours. Let's dig into today's text with a heart and mind open to what He wants to teach us.

Read 1 Peter 1:13

Yesterday, as we looked at all that the prophets and angels longed to see, I hope you recognized how blessed we are to be on this side of the cross, looking back at how God's battle plan played out. It's amazing to see that the victory was won in Jesus Christ. A victory that we blessedly take part in.

Peter is just getting started with this letter to the Christians who are scattered around the Roman Empire, having laid the foundation of their hope in their salvation that Christ secured for them, he goes on to say,

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit,
fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you
at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"Therefore," Peter says, because you have been born again to a living hope; because you love Him and believe in Him, even though you've never seen Him; because of the hope that is to come when Christ returns; because you are experiencing what the prophets foretold, and the angels stoop down to see, because of all of that, you are to live a certain way.

1 Peter - Week 2, Day 2

Verse 13 is pretty explicit in how this new life is to function. Let's look at what it says:

"Prepare our minds for action" - This is such an interesting analogy. The term in Koine Greek is "gird up the loins of your mind." Let me try to paint a visual for you. Long robes were the attire in biblical days, now, if you have ever tried to run in a long dress, you know how the ability to run can really be impeded, you can end up entangled and tripped up. You certainly wouldn't win the race if you were up against someone else. So, when someone needed to run, they would prepare by taking the bottom hem of the robe and bringing it up through their legs, they would then tuck it into a belt so that it essentially created a pair of pants, which was much more conducive to action, making them ready for any movement they needed to do, in any direction. The "loins" were seen as foundational to movement, to procreation, and to strength. Out of that source of strength they could freely move as long as they were girded up.

So, that makes sense, to gird up your loins, but to complete it with, "the loins of your mind," what did Peter mean by that? By the way, this is the only place in the Bible where that terminology is used in regards to the mind. Peter was painting a picture as well.

As we look into the Greek verbiage we find that the "mind" is the faculty of knowing, understanding, reflecting and processing thought. That means the foundations of our minds, that part of our mind where thought is processed, is to be prepared in such a way that we are ready for whatever comes. Our knowing, understanding, reflecting and processing thought, should have the decision process already in place to make the right choices regardless of who or what we are facing. For us as believers, these foundations and processes have to be realized through the study of God's word. The more we know of God's thoughts, the better we are equipped to respond in a Christ like manner to situations. Peter's laying down some sound doctrine here, that they need to exchange their worldly/human viewpoint with a godly viewpoint. Prepare their minds for action.

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The second thing Peter says to do is -

"Keep sober in spirit" - We need to make it a matter of purpose to not be controlled or led astray by any intoxicants or outside influences. This isn't just talking about alcohol or drugs, but about anything outside of the Spirit of Christ that would lead us the wrong direction, those outside influences could very well include our emotions or experience. When we are led by those, our minds can be led astray, and certainly, our actions can result in some very bad choices.

Think about a decision that you've made, or an action that you took, based solely on emotions or experience. Whether it were words spoken harshly, a wrong relationship we got involved with, a material possession we just had to have no matter the cost, or food we put in our mouths, decisions based on emotions alone, can be harmful to us, both physically and mentally, but even more so, spiritually, as sin breaks our fellowship with God.

Odds are, some of you have experienced an abusive situation, or other horrifying experience, that has since effected every other relationship, or experience. First of all, I'm truly sorry that you had to endure any such thing, but, please know, even those events don't have to continue to control your mind, or your life. As Peter points out, and God's word explains, there is hope! Even better news, He is able to use what was intended for evil to use it as a focal point of His love and grace in your life. If you will allow His healing. Joy is on the other side.

God's word is replete with help and instruction on how to handle life's situations:

Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

What kind of weapons does v. 4 say we have?

What are the instructions in v. 5?

There is never a battle we must lose, not even when it's a battle of our own mind and will. For our weapons are divinely powerful. It doesn't matter how large the fortress is, we have God's divine power to destroy it. And God's arsenal never runs out.

Oh, quick, turn over to 2 Corinthians 12:9. Write His words to you:

Look what the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:18 - What is the instruction there?

Bottom line, we aren't to allow anything other than the Holy Spirit to control us. The word "filled" means, "saturated to the point of control." The Holy Spirit should be the One in control. Not drink, not drugs, not emotions, or experience, nothing except the Holy Spirit of God who knows the divine plan for our life, and how to achieve it. We must keep sober in spirit, for then, and only then, will we be living in the will of God. We have a choice to make. Even in the words looked at today in v. 13, they describe a tandem act, you and the Holy Spirit working together. You participate in the action, and you are affected by the result of it.

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You wonder how you can do that in light of your emotions and experience? Here's what Peter says,

"Fix our hope completely on the grace to be brought to you..." - Peter reminds them again to have tunnel vision in regards to their salvation to come. In other words, when our mind is set on the hope of His coming we will be able to deal with life differently. As we know our God and His word, we will be equipped to handle life. Our lens from which we view the world and our experiences will be different. That "thing" that we experienced is going to, along with everything else in this life, result in you receiving His grace. Grace that is sufficient now, and grace that take us into eternity. In light of that, it should change things. That grace that is to come means that it doesn't matter what this world does, it has no effect on the eventual outcome - WE WIN! God's grace wins!

The term, "fix our hope completely..." is a command to repeatedly maintain the hope we have in Christ. Every morning, every day, continue to gird up your mind (be in His word, obey His Spirit), and fixate on the hope you have in eternity. He's coming again, and He's coming to take you home.

Since we are in Christ, we don't have to wait for that hope, it's a living hope! A hope for now, based on the then! We can live in hope today, not defeat, because the victory was won in the past with the result continuing in the future, and we live in the in between! Living in Hope!

That is why Peter says, "In this you greatly rejoice..." (1:6) The fulfillment of His grace waits on the other end. Fix your hope on that!

Then answer these questions:

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How would your decision making process be different if you allowed the Spirit to make your decisions for you?

Would your relationships be different? If so, how?

Would your level of fear change if your hope was fixed on the future?

What if you kept your mind focused on God's grace to come rather than the situation at hand? What would your emotions be like then?

Do you know any verses that "prepare" your mind for action? What are they?

As Peter encouraged, I do as well, for I know that life is different when we submit to the Holy Spirit to correct us, heal us, and lead us. Prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit and fix your hope completely, completely! on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. And then, friend, rejoice.

1 Peter - Week 2, Day 2

Review:

- Today's Text: 1 Peter 1:13
- Girding the loins of our mind, prepare for action - Be in the Word, follow The Spirit
- Keep sober in spirit
- Fix our hope on the salvation to come
- Instructions of warfare (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)
- His grace is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- Let His Spirit control you (Ephesians 5:18)
- Submit only to the Holy Spirit to correct us, heal us, and lead us